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Muslim and Non-Muslim Adolescents' Reasoning About Freedom of Speech and Minority Rights

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An experimental questionnaire study, conducted in the Netherlands, examined adolescents' reasoning about freedom of speech and minority rights. Muslim minority and non-Muslim majority adolescents (12–18 years) made judgments of different types of behaviors and different contexts. The group membership of participants had a clear effect. Muslim participants were less in favor of freedom of speech if it involved the offending of religious beliefs and were more in favor of Muslim minority rights. There were also cross-group gender differences whereby parental practices that negatively affect females were more strongly rejected by Muslim females than by Muslim males and non-Muslim females and males. The findings are discussed with reference to social-cognitive domain theory and intergroup theories.

Freedoms and rights are of concern to people all over the world. These issues are increasingly important today due to several decades of increased migration and the growing acknowledgment that many societies are now religiously, linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse. Within democratic societies, the development of adolescents' judgments about free speech and religious minority rights is an issue of particular salience. This is because such societies commonly see the teaching of tolerant reactions to dissenting others as an important part of the socialization of their youth.

Adolescence is both a salient and critical period for the learning of civil liberties and political tolerance (e.g., Avery, 1989; Berti, 2005). This learning takes place within the interpretations and representations circulating within a given society. Current debates in many Western societies focus on religious diversity and the position of Islam in particular. Commentators and politicians, for example, often argue that freedoms and rights characterize Western democratic societies and are of minimal concern to Muslims or even contradictory to Islam. It is suggested and claimed that the rights-based morality of Western societies differs from the duty-based morality of Islam. This difference would be symbolized by the debate on the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed, the *fatwa* against the British novelist Salman Rushdie, and the murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh. Hence, according to some commentators, there is an ongoing "West–Muslim" cultural war, especially over issues of free speech and religious minority rights (e.g., Scroggins, 2005). Islam has moved to the center of immigration and diversity debates and politics in European countries (Zolberg & Long, 1999).

Thus, the development of reasoning about free speech and Muslim minority rights among both non-Muslim and Muslim adolescents is a key issue for understanding intergroup relations in Western countries. To address this issue, we conducted a study with majority group non-Muslim and minority group Muslim participants between 12 and 18 years of age. Various aspects of free speech and religious minority rights were investigated, such as agent, social implications, and belief type. We used an experimental questionnaire design to examine these aspects as well as the effects of ethnic group, age, and gender. We conducted our study in the Netherlands, one of the most secular countries in the world (Te Grotenhuis & Scheepers, 2001). Theoretically, the research aims to combine social-cognitive domain theory and intergroup theories. The research seeks to make a contribution to recent efforts to integrate these two theoretical frameworks. The work of Killen and colleagues (Killen, Margie, & Sinno, 2006; Killen, Sinno, & Margie, in press), for example, has shown that ethnic and racial stereotypes and prejudices enters into the social reasoning behind exclusion and that children's own ethnicity influences how they evaluate social exclusion.

Freedom of Speech and Minority Rights

Freedom of speech and minority rights are necessary for a diverse, equal, and democratic society. A limited number of studies have examined the development of judgments about freedom and rights in different contexts. In two studies among children,

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adolescents, and young adults in North America, Helwig (1995, 1997) examined freedom of speech and freedom of religion in contexts of conflicting considerations, such as psychological and physical harm, and equality of opportunity. Helwig found a fair amount of variation in the judgments and younger participants were more likely than the older ones to subordinate each freedom to preventing harm and inequalities. Further, children were more concerned with psychological needs involved in freedom of speech, whereas there was growing recognition of the societal and democratic functions of free speech during adolescence.

In another study in Canada, Helwig and Prencipe (1999) examined children's judgments about flag-burning scenarios. Children found flag burning offensive and 6-year-olds more than 8-year-olds and 10-year-olds said that there should be a law in Canada and in other countries prohibiting flag burning. In evaluating the scenarios, children were also found to take the intentions of agents and the possible negative consequences for others into account.

Turiel and Wainryb (1998) examined a non-Western traditional cultural group: the Islamic Druze community in northern Israel. As with the Helwig studies, this community also endorsed freedom of speech and religion, and the exercising of these rights was evaluated in relation to moral, societal, and psychological considerations. Further, cross-national studies have shown that adolescents in different countries endorse human rights but also evaluate these in relation to different considerations and concerns, such as community welfare and social order (Clemence, Doise, de Rosa, & Gonzalez, 1995).

The findings of these and other studies (see Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Neff & Helwig, 2002; Ruck, Abramovitch, & Keating, 1998; Ruck, Peterson-Badali, & Day, 2002) demonstrate the complex nature of adolescents' judgments and reasoning about civil liberties. Endorsement of free speech and religious minority rights appears to be contextual and dependent on the ways that individuals coordinate and weigh different sorts of knowledge. The theoretical implication is that the social-cognitive domain model (see Smetana, 2006; Turiel, 2002) seems more adequate for understanding the development of social and political judgments than a cognitive developmental framework that proposes increasingly advanced stages of endorsement of civil liberties (e.g., Enright & Lapsey, 1981; Enright, Lapsey, Franklin, & Streuck, 1984).

The social-cognitive domain model emphasizes that children and adolescents apply different domains of knowledge in their social reasoning and judgments. Not only moral considerations (fairness, others' welfare) but also social-conventional (group norms, traditions) and psychological ones (self-understanding, personal choices) are used for the evaluation of a range of social events. This model has been applied to complex issues and for understanding how individuals differ in the ways that they categorize and evaluate social events. The enactment of free speech and minority rights, for example, might be seen as producing harm to people, as going against conventional standards, or as threatening the position and identity of one's group.

However, social-cognitive domain investigations into the endorsement of freedom of speech and religious minority rights have not taken the intergroup context into account. That is to say, the existing research has not systematically examined and compared the views of majority and minority group members living in a religiously and culturally diverse Western society such as the Netherlands. Social psychological research has demonstrated that the context of intergroup relationships affects children's and adolescents' perceptions and evaluative judgments (see Bennett & Sani, 2004). Many studies have shown that negative stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination are pervasive in the lives of ethnic minority youth (e.g., Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; McKown & Weinstein, 2003). For example, in a large-scale national study in the Netherlands, Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) found that ethnic minority group early adolescents are more likely than Dutch children to become the victims of ethnic name calling and social exclusion. The highest level of experienced ethnic name calling was found for the Islamic Turkish children. Research has shown that these kinds of experiences can have an impact on children's moral reasoning (see Killen et al., in press).

In the Netherlands, as in other countries, the problems of a multicultural society are increasingly discussed in relation to Islam. In the media, Islam has become a symbol of problems related to ethnic minorities and immigration (see Ter Wal, 2004). As a result, public discussion focuses on the need to compel Islamic groups to assimilate and to reject or seriously limit Muslim minority rights. Appealing to the right of free speech, leading politicians have publicly described Islam as a ''backward religion'' that seriously threatens Dutch secularized society and culture and have defined Muslims as a ''fifth column'' and argued for the need for a ''cold war'' against Islam (see Scroggins, 2005; Verkuyten & Zaremba, 2005). Furthermore, in 2005, the Pew Global Project Attitudes found that 51% of the Dutch population declared unfavorable opinions about Muslims. This was the highest percentage of all countries examined. In

France, for example, the percentage was 36%, and in Great Britain, it was 14%. In addition, of all groups in the Netherlands, Muslims have on average the poorest academic results, irrespective of how academic performance is defined, and the weakest labor market position.

It is likely that this intergroup context affects how Muslim minority and non-Muslim majority adolescents evaluate issues of freedom of speech and Muslim minority rights, and the ways in which they evaluate the different considerations and concerns. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) argue that under identity threatening circumstances, people will try to restore and reassert their threatened collective identity. Furthermore, realistic group conflict theory emphasizes the role of group interest in the dynamics of intergroup relations (e.g., Bobo, 1999; Sherif, 1966). For minority groups, minority rights offer the possibility of maintaining one's own distinctive culture and identity and obtaining a more equal social status in society. Because of this, we expected that when compared to non-Muslim participants, Muslim participants would, on the whole, be less in favor of free speech that negatively portrays religions in general (and Islam in particular) and that they would be more in favor of Muslim minority rights. We did not, however, think it would necessarily mean that Muslim participants would be less in favor of freedom of speech in general and of other (non-Muslim) group rights. When no intergroup concerns are involved, Muslim and non-Muslim participants were expected to give similar judgments.

Examining Judgments About Freedom of Speech and Minority Rights

People can be both accepting and rejecting of civil liberties because judgments seem to depend on many factors, such as what and who people are asked to accept, the way in which they are asked to be accepting, and the underlying belief they are asked to accept. Our study has four aspects for examining judgments about freedom of speech and minority rights. These aspects relate to political rights, to the social consequences of effectuating rights, to the role of underlying belief type, and to dimensions of acceptance.

The first that we deal with here focuses on the endorsement of political rights. The great majority of existing research examines levels of political tolerance, particularly the endorsement of freedoms and civil liberties. There are various studies on adolescents' political thinking and behavior (see Berti, 2005, for a review). Among other things, these studies show that adolescents tend to support democratic rights in the abstract. However, similar to adults and in agreement with the social-cognitive domain model, adolescents often do not endorse the same rights in concrete circumstances (Helwig, 1995). It is one thing to endorse the freedom of speech in general, and another thing to apply this freedom to, for example, Muslim groups living in a secular country (Turiel, 2002). We focused on two concrete examples of freedom of speech, namely the freedom to offend others and the freedom to incite a war. Thus, we presented freedom of speech as in conflict with psychological harm and physical harm, respectively. Additionally, we examined two specific minority rights, namely, the right to found one's own schools and the right to demonstrate and protest. Both rights are guaranteed by the Dutch constitution but were presented as in conflict with the importance of social integration in society and the importance of valuing national identity. We used a between-subjects design to compare the judgments toward Muslim and non-Muslim groups claiming these freedoms and rights. We expected that the non-Muslim majority participants would be less accepting toward the Muslim than the non-Muslim group, whereas the Muslim minority participants would be more accepting toward the Muslims than the non-Muslims.

The second aspect we examined was the social implications of particular acts performed by Muslims. Civil liberties always have limits and should be evaluated in relation to other principles and values. Most people do not support freedoms and rights when they are in serious conflict with other considerations and concerns. For example, one's own freedom ends when it threatens the freedom of others. Also, the right to act differently is limited by principles of equality and by operative public norms that govern the civic relations between people (Parekh, 2000). In our research, we contrasted the freedom of speech with the norm of not offending others. Furthermore, the freedom of religious expression (wearing of a headscarf) was contrasted with, respectively, democratic principles and the operative public norm of interpersonal communication. For all three contrasts, we used a between-subjects design in order to make a distinction between ''minimal'' and ''maximal'' social implications. This distinction refers to the extent to which the act contradicts the other principle or norm; for example, freedom of speech in contrast to ridiculing (minimal) or deeply offending (maximal) people. It was expected that both Muslim and non-Muslim participants would be less accepting in the maximal compared to the minimal conditions. In

addition, we expected that compared to non-Muslims, Muslim minority participants would be less in favor of free speech that offends religious beliefs and more in favor of Muslim minority rights.

The third aspect we examined was how adolescents' judgments can depend on the underlying belief type. A basic distinction in belief type is between what one believes to be true and what one believes to be right. The former are beliefs about matters of fact and the latter are value judgments. Across a broad age range, developmental studies have found that children and adolescents distinguish between informational and moral beliefs and use this distinction in their judgments of social practices. For example, in a study among an ethnically mixed sample from the San Francisco Bay area, Wainryb (1993) showed that children and adolescents (9–23 years) contextualized their own judgments when they apply them to unknown cultural out-groups (''a country'') with different informational beliefs (what they believe to be true) but not when they apply them to out-groups with different moral beliefs (what they believe to be right). In another study among European Americans, Wainryb, Shaw, and Maianu (1998) found that children and early adolescents (7–14 years) are more tolerant when the underlying dissenting beliefs were informational as opposed to moral.

Hence, the distinction between what one believes to be true and what one believes to be right seems to be important for judgments about minority rights. One reason for this is that the type of underlying belief can be used to infer intentions behind the practice that one dislikes or rejects but is asked to accept. Ignorance and misinformation can be inferred from informational dissent, whereas badness or immorality is a more likely inference from moral dissent. Following previous studies, we expected participants to be more accepting of Muslim and non-Muslim ''harmful'' practices based on informational beliefs than on moral beliefs. We used a between-subjects design to examine this expectation. Further, we examined the evaluation of practices of Muslim parents (female circumcision and gender differentiation) and of non-Muslim parents (home education and child vaccination) and we expected that non-Muslim majority participants would be less accepting toward the former than Muslim participants. However, both groups of participants were not expected to differ in their evaluation of practices of non-Muslim parents because in that case no intergroup concerns are at stake.

In addition to examining the effects of varying the content of the underlying beliefs, the fourth aspect we focused on was the different ways in which people may be asked to endorse minority rights. Accepting that people have a right to *hold* dissenting beliefs does not have to imply that one tolerates the *public expression* of such beliefs or the *actual practices* based on such beliefs (Vogt, 1997). These dimensions of tolerance can trigger different levels of endorsement. In their study, Wainryb et al. (1998) found, for example, that European American children and early adolescents were more accepting of dissenting speech than practices (see also Witenberg, 2002). In the present study, we focused on the judgment of actual dissenting practices by Muslim and non-Muslim parents toward their children and of the public expression aimed at trying to convince other parents to act similarly. In general, we expected that adolescents of both groups of participants would be relatively accepting toward public expressions because this is linked to freedom of speech, can be thought to stimulate debate, and does not directly cause harm or injustice to other people (see Wainryb et al., 1998). In contrast, actual practices based on dissenting beliefs can involve harmful and unfair consequences and therefore we expected less acceptance for this dimension.

Age and Gender

Enright and Lapsey (1981) have described a developmental progression from a generally intolerant attitude during the childhood years through to increasingly tolerant judgments during adolescence (see also Enright et al., 1984). The sequence they proposed runs parallel with changes in perspective taking and Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Other studies have found similar age-related changes, which are attributed to increasingly complex and principled forms of reasoning (e.g., Bobo & Licardi, 1989; Thalhammer, Wood, Bird, Avery, & Sullivan, 1994).

However, there are also studies that do not find age differences in moral judgments (e.g., Wainryb, 1993) or find that older adolescents are less tolerant than younger ones (e.g., Witenberg, 2002). In developmental stage studies, tolerance is typically examined as a single, global construct and dimensions of tolerance and types of dissenting beliefs and practices are not considered. Studies that do take different aspects of tolerance into account give a more complex picture of age differences with tolerance and intolerance coexisting at all ages (e.g., Wainryb et al., 1998). More importantly, studies on children's and adolescents' reasoning about civil liberties do not find support for a global stage interpretation (e.g. Helwig, 1995, 1997; Ruck et al., 1998). Rather, with age, early-developed concepts of rights and freedoms are increasingly assessed with other considerations and concerns,

including the intergroup context. In contrast to young children (early), adolescents tend to make more context-sensitive judgments about freedoms and rights. The context dependence of the endorsement of civil liberties makes it unlikely that there is an age-related global developmental trend in our adolescent sample. Hence, we did not expect a consistent positive effect for age.

Killen and colleagues have found gender differences in children's reasoning about ethnic and racial exclusion. Compared to girls, boys find exclusion more acceptable and more often use conventional reasoning and stereotypes in justifying their evaluations (Killen et al., in press). Other research from the cognitive domain approach, however, has found few gender differences (Smetana, 2006). Further, studies on the development of judgments of freedoms and rights have either not examined gender differences (e.g., Helwig & Prencipe, 1999; Ruck et al., 2002) or found no differences between females and males (e.g., Helwig, 1995, 1997; Sigelman & Toebben, 1992). However, females may experience greater restrictions in their choices, freedoms, and opportunities, and these experiences can affect moral and social judgments (Turiel, 2002). Analyses and perceptions of differences between the Western and the Muslim world emphasize differential gender relationships. The ideal of egalitarian gender arrangements in Western societies is contrasted with the patriarchal and unequal gender relations in Muslim communities. Obedience to the father and the placing of various restrictions on the activities of females (e.g., regarding leisure time, sexuality, marriage, and the distribution of household tasks) is more common in some of these communities. Endorsement of Muslim minority rights involving women's clothing and gender arrangements and practices were considered in our study, and we explored whether male and female participants differ in their judgments of these practices.

Current Study

To summarize, the main purpose of this investigation was to examine the contextual nature and development of reasoning about freedom of speech and minority rights among Muslim minority and non-Muslim majority adolescents. The study focuses on different forms and aspects of this reasoning by examining types of freedom of speech and types of minority rights, contrasting values, belief type, and dimensions of acceptance. In general, we expected that compared to non-Muslims, Muslim participants would be less endorsing of freedom of speech when it involves offending religious beliefs and to be more endorsing of Muslim minority rights. In addition, both Muslim and non-Muslim adolescents were expected to be less accepting of practices that are more difficult to reconcile with other values, to be less accepting of practices based on dissenting moral beliefs than informational beliefs, and to be less accepting toward actual acts as opposed to public speech. We also examined age and gender differences. Gender differences were explored, and we did not expect a consistent effect for age.

Research on freedoms, rights, and tolerance often lacks relevance and ecological validity. Studies have examined, for example, the endorsement of abstract principles such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. However, principle considerations differ from support for practical implications and situations. Most debates on freedoms, rights, and diversity are not about principles per se but rather about whether a principle is appropriate for a specific case at hand and how exactly it should be interpreted. Furthermore, studies that do use concrete examples, for example, in dilemmas and vignettes, tend to use rather unfamiliar and hypothetical scenarios. In our study, we tried to maximize the relevance and validity of the research by using cases and situations that currently are, or recently were, debated in Dutch society.

In this study, we are interested in the endorsement of free speech and minority rights among non-Muslim majority adolescents and Muslim minority group peers. Our focus is on the status difference between the majority and the minority group. In examining this difference, we considered it important to consider religiousness. It is likely that the Muslim participants are much more religious than the Dutch non-Muslims. Therefore, we assessed participants self-report of their own religiousness and took this variable into account in the analyses.

Method

Participants

The sample included 557 participants between 12 and 18 years of age ($M = 14.99$, $SD = 1.72$) from three schools. In total, 49.9% were females and 50.1% were males. Females and males did not differ significantly for age. All participants followed upper general secondary education (HAVO/VWO: ''Higher General Secondary Education''/''Preparatory Scientific Education''). The non-Muslim group consisted of 324 adolescents (49.6% females, mean age = 14.57 years; 50.4% males, mean age = 14.66) with two ethnically Dutch parents. The mean age of females and males

within this group did not differ significantly. The Muslim group was composed of 231 Muslim adolescents (53.7% females, mean age = 15.23 years; 46.3% males, mean age = 15.14 years) with Dutch citizenship, but whose parents came to the Netherlands as immigrants from countries such as Turkey, Morocco, Iran, Iraq, and Bosnia. The mean age of females and males within this group did not differ significantly. The gender distribution was similar in both groups, $\chi^2(1, 556) = 2.62$, $p > .10$. However, the Muslim group was somewhat older ($M = 15.19$, $SD = 1.77$) than the non-Muslim group ($M = 14.61$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(556) = 4.28$, $p < .001$. The two groups attended the same ethnically heterogeneous schools and took classes together. The adolescents were asked to participate in a study on current societal issues. They participated on a voluntary basis and the anonymous paper-and-pencil questionnaire was administered in separate class sessions and under supervision. All students in the different classes agreed to participate in the study. There was no information available on the socioeconomic backgrounds of the students.

Design and Measures

For examining the contextual nature of adolescents' judgments about free speech and Muslim minority rights, an experimentally questionnaire design with different types of scenarios were used. Because we expected the different judgments to be relatively independent, the measures were not counterbalanced but given in a fixed order. Several of these scenarios have been used in a previous study (Verkuyten & Slooter, 2007).

First, two scenarios measured the *endorsement of free speech*. For the first scenario, there were two conditions (between subjects): (a) ridiculing religion (''Should it be allowed that a magazine uses drawings and words to make God and religion ridiculous?'') and (b) racist views (''Should it be allowed that racist groups express their views in the media?''). Two statements followed the scenario in each condition: (a) offensive content (''No, because this is offending to some groups in society'') and (b) free speech (''Yes, because there is always the right of free speech''). Responses to these statements were scored using 5-point scales ranging from *totally do not agree* (−2) to *totally agree* (2).

The second scenario also had two conditions (between subjects): (a) incite war against Islam (''Should it be allowed that on the Internet people can incite a war against Islam?'') and (b) call for Jihad (''Should it be allowed that on the Internet people can call for the Jihad?''). In each condition, two statements (with 5-point scales) followed the scenario: (a) inciting violence (''No, because this incites violence'') and (b) free speech (''Yes, because there is free speech''). For both scenarios, the level of agreement with the two statements was strongly related ($r = -.72$ and $r = -.64$, respectively). Therefore, we reversed the score of one of the two questions and computed two average scores whereby a higher score indicates a stronger endorsement of free speech.

Second, two scenarios were used to measure the *endorsement of Muslim minority rights*. The first scenario, with two conditions (between subjects), concerned the founding of separate schools: (a) Islamic schools (''Should people have the right to found Islamic schools to which only Muslims can go?'') and (b) elite schools (''Should people have the right to found expensive elite schools to which only children of very rich parents can go?''). Two statements (with 5-point scales) followed the scenario in each condition: (a) social cohesion (''No, because this is bad for social cohesion in society'') and (b) right of education (''Yes, because one should always respect the right of freedom of education'').

The second scenario was concerned with the right to demonstrate and protest. There were again two conditions (between subjects): (a) Muslim demonstration (''A group of Muslims wants to hold a demonstration against the anti-Muslim feelings in the Netherlands. Is it ok when they burn the Dutch flag during the demonstration?'') and (b) Surinamese demonstration (''A group of Surinamers wants to hold a demonstration against the Dutch history of slavery. Is it ok when they burn the Dutch flag during the demonstration?''). The Surinamese are one of the largest minority groups and they originate from the former Dutch colony of Surinam in South America. The two statements (with 5-point scales) following both versions were (a) Dutch identity (''No, because that is a lack of respect for Dutch identity'') and (b) right to protest (''Yes, because every group has the right to demonstrate and protest''). For both scenarios, the level of agreement with the two statements was strongly related ($r = -.70$ and $r = -.61$, respectively). Thus, we reversed the score of one of the two questions and computed two average scores whereby a higher score was indicative of a stronger endorsement of Muslim minority rights.

Third, to examine whether judgments toward free speech and Muslim minority practices depended on the *social implications* or the degree to which these are contradictory with other values and norms (minimal and maximal), we used three scenarios. One about free speech and two about women's clothing (in this case, a headscarf). Each scenario had either a ''minimal''

version in which the practice had rather modest implications or a ''maximal'' version in which the practice had more far-reaching consequences. Participants were presented with either the minimal or the maximal versions for all three scenarios (between subjects).

The first scenario was on freedom of speech: (a) minimal condition (''Freedom of speech is an important value in our society. Another important value is that you should not offend people. Imagine that a film director makes a film in which he makes a fool of religious people'') and (2) maximal condition (''... makes a film in which he causes deep offence to those of religious persuasion''). Following the scenario in each condition, the participants were asked, ''What should the film company do with this film?'' There were four response categories: (a) ''Definitely not release the film''; (b) ''Try to convince the director to change the film, but not release the film when he does not agree''; (c) ''Try to convince the director to change the film, but release it when he does not agree''; and (d) ''Do nothing and release the film.''

The second scenario was on politics and religious expression (clothing) and there were two conditions: (a) minimal (''Democracy and people's freedom to make their own choices are central values in Dutch society. Imagine that an Islamic political party gets the majority vote in a local election in a Dutch city or village. This party can then decide to make the area more Islamic by asking women to wear a headscarf'') and (b) maximal (''... to make the area more Islamic by making the wearing of a headscarf obligatory''). The level of acceptance was judged by asking the participants, ''What should the Dutch government do about this party's decision?'' There were four response categories: (a) ''Simply not accept this decision''; (b) ''Try to convince the party to reconsider the decision, but forbid it when they do not agree''; (c) ''Try to convince the party to reconsider the decision, but allow it when they do not agree''; and (d) ''Do nothing and accept it.''

The third scenario was about clothing at school. There were again two conditions: (a) minimal (''It is important in Dutch society that people can communicate with each other in an open way. Another important value is that people themselves can decide which clothes they like to wear. Imagine that there is a group of pupils at your school that voluntarily decides to wear a headscarf that covers only their hair'') and (b) maximal (''... that not only covers their hair but also their face''). The participants were asked what the school should do about this: (a) ''Simply not accept it''; (b) ''Try to convince them, but expel them from school when they do not agree''; (c) ''Try to convince them, but allow it when they do not agree''; and (d)''Do nothing and accept it.''

Fourth, to examine *two dimensions* and participants' acceptance of minority practices based on *different beliefs*, four scenarios were used. Two were related to perceived Muslim practices and two others were not. All four were similar in that they involved the behavior of parents toward their children based on either an informational belief or a moral belief (between subjects). The two Muslim stories described parents who (from a Western point of view) engage in a harmful or unfair practices. The first story was on female circumcision that is taken to refer to Islam because it is understood in this way in public discourse and debate. The practice, however, originated long before the spread of Islam and is also conducted in societies that are not Muslim (Gregg, 2005). The female circumcision story had two conditions: (a) informational belief (''A very light form of female circumcision is sometimes compared with male circumcision. Some parents practice this light form because they think it is good for the healthy physical development of girls'') and (b) moral belief (''... because they think it is required by their religion and culture''). The second story was on gender differentiation: (a) informational belief (''A Muslim father allows his sons to go out as often as they like, but he forbids his daughters to do the same. The father does this because of the fact that girls run more risks and are more vulnerable'') and (b) moral belief (''... because he finds it good and right that boys have more freedom than girls'').

The two non-Muslim stories also described parents who engage in practices that are uncommon in Dutch society. One was on home education: (a) informational belief (''Some parents prefer to educate their children at home rather than send them to school. These parents think that with home-education, children learn better and much more than at school'') and (b) moral belief (''... that they have the right to raise their children the way they want to''). The other story was on vaccination: (a) informational belief (''There are parents that do not let their young children be vaccinated against all kinds off diseases. They do this because they think that vaccination hampers the development of the natural body resistance'') and (2) moral belief (''... that vaccination goes against their convictions about life'').

For each of the four scenarios, two dimensions of acceptance were tapped by assessing participants' judgments about the act itself (*act*) and parents campaigning to convince other parents to do the same (*public speech*). For the ''act,'' the questions were, respectively, ''Should it be allowed that parents have

their daughters circumcised in this way?'' ''Should it be allowed that the father treats his sons and daughters differently?'' ''Should it be allowed that parents do not send their children to school?'' and ''Should it be allowed that these parents do not vaccinate their young children?'' There were 5-point scales ranging from *no, certainly not* (1) to *yes, certainly* (5). For ''public speech,'' the questions, with the same 5-point scales, asked whether it should be allowed that these parents campaign in order to try to convince other parents to do the same.

Finally, for measuring the adolescents' self-reported *religiousness*, two statements were presented and the participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each using a 5-point scale ranging from *totally do not agree* to *totally agree*. The two items were ''God and religious rules are the most important guidelines in my life'' and ''I find it very important to be religious.'' The responses for both statements were highly correlated and Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Results

After examining differences in adolescents' self-reported religiousness, the results for the adolescents' reasoning about freedom of speech and minority rights are divided into four sections: (a) freedom of speech, (b) Muslim minority rights, (c) social implications (minimal and maximal), and (d) beliefs and dimensions of minority practices. The different judgments were examined using general linear model (GLM) univariate and multivariate procedures (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Between-subjects analyses were conducted, in which experimental condition, participant group, and gender were included as factors, and age and (the covariate) religiousness as continuous variables. Significant interaction effects where examined using simple slope analysis and post hoc tests (Tukey's honestly significant difference [HSD]).

We first examined whether there were differences in adolescents' self-reported religiousness between the two groups of participants (non-Muslims vs. Muslims), between males and females, and for age. The GLM univariate procedure indicated a strong effect for participant group, $F(1, 551) = 99.89$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .26$. The mean score for the Muslim minority group ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.93$) indicated high religiousness, whereas the mean score for the non-Muslim majority group was on the ''disagree'' side of the scale ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.05$). For the Muslim group, 83% of the participants scored above the neutral midpoint of the scale, whereas for the non-Muslim, 81.5% scored below the midpoint, indicating that the majority had a secular orientation. There was also a significant effect for age, $F(1, 551) = 11.74$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Older adolescents were more religious than younger adolescents ($B = .15$). There was also a significant interaction effect between participant group and gender, $F(1, 551) = 6.58$, $p = .011$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Post hoc analysis showed that there was no gender difference for the non-Muslim group, but Muslim females scored significantly higher than Muslim males ($M = 4.38$, $M = 4.05$, respectively). No other significant effects were found.

Freedom of Speech

The participants were asked to what extent people should have freedom of speech in the media. There were two scenarios: making religious offensive statements and rallying for war. The mean scores for both freedoms were below the neutral midpoint of the scales ($M = -0.61$, $SD = 1.28$, and $M = -1.12$, $SD = 1.05$, respectively) indicating that the participants tended to reject the affirmation of both freedoms. A paired sample t test indicated that the rejection was stronger for rallying for war than for making offensive statements, $t(556) = 7.55$, $p < .001$. The two measures were also unrelated ($r = .08$, $p > .05$).

For the freedom to make offensive statements, there were two conditions (between subjects): ridiculing religion and racist statements. The GLM procedure indicated that the full model accounted for 22% of the variance. The results indicated a significant negative effect for the covariate religiousness, $F(1, 551) = 21.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Religious participants were more strongly against freedom of speech than nonreligious participants. In addition, there was a main effect for participant group. This effect was qualified, however, by a significant interaction effect with condition, $F(1, 551) = 9.79$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Table 1 indicates that compared to non-Muslim participants, the Muslims were more strongly against freedom of speech that involves the ridiculing or offending of God and religion.

There were also two conditions for the second scenario on the freedom to incite or rally for war: war against Islam and the Jihad. The full model explained 9.2% of the variance. The GLM procedure indicated that the covariate religiousness was not significant. There was a significant main effect for condition and this effect was qualified by two significant interaction effects: between condition and participant group, $F(1, 551) = 4.68$, $p = .031$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and between condition and gender, $F(1, 551) = 9.47$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. For the former interaction effect, Table 1 shows that both the Muslim and the non-Muslim

Table 1
Adjusted Means (Controlling for Religiousness) and Standard Deviations (Between Brackets) for Freedom of Speech and Muslim Minority Rights for the Non-Muslim and Muslim Participants

	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Total
Freedom of speech			
Free speech			
Secular	−.41 (1.32)	−1.05 (0.95)	−.71 (1.35)
Racist	−.50 (1.18)	−.68 (1.12)	−.56 (1.21)
Free speech			
War on Islam	−1.22 (1.08)	−1.50 (0.73)	−1.39 (0.97)
Jihad	−.93 (1.06)	−.82 (1.15)	−.85 (1.09)
Minority rights			
Founding schools			
Islamic schools	−.47 (1.26)	.84 (1.18)	.16 (1.38)
Elite schools	.06 (1.33)	−.71 (1.23)	−.33 (1.34)
Demonstration			
Muslims	−1.21 (0.93)	.21 (1.34)	−.77 (1.21)
Surinamese	−.67 (1.13)	−.48 (1.27)	−.59 (1.19)
Social implications			
Minimal – maximal			
Free speech			
Minimal	2.31 (1.01)	2.05 (1.01)	2.15 (1.02)
Maximal	1.95 (1.05)	1.99 (0.99)	1.99 (1.04)
Headscarf			
Minimal	2.74 (0.88)	3.32 (0.79)	3.03 (0.90)
Maximal	2.43 (0.87)	3.16 (.0.72)	2.79 (0.91)

Note. For freedom of speech and minority rights, 5-point scales (−2 to 2). For minimal – maximal, 4-point scales (1 to 4).

participants rejected rallying for a war against Islam more strongly than they rejected calling for the Jihad, but the rejection was strongest among the Muslims. The latter interaction effect indicated that compared to males, females were more strongly against a call for war against Islam ($M = -1.23$, and $M = -1.49$, respectively) and less strongly against mobilizing for the Jihad ($M = -1.01$, and $M = -.72$, respectively).

Muslim Minority Rights

The participants were asked to what extent people have the right to establish separate schools and to demonstrate and protest. The mean scores for both rights were below the neutral midpoint of the scales ($M = -0.15$, $SD = 1.37$, and $M = -0.75$, $SD = 1.20$, respectively) indicating that the participants tended to reject the effectuation of both rights. A paired sample t test indicated that the rejection was stronger for the right to demonstrate than the right to establish separate schools, $t(556) = 8.54$, $p < .001$. The two measures were positively related ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) but the association was low indicating a limited amount of shared variance (< 4%).

For the right to found separate schools, there were two conditions: Islamic and elite schools. The full model explained 18.5% of the variance. The GLM procedure indicated a main effect for condition that was, however, qualified by an interaction effect between condition and participant group, $F(1, 551) = 58.12$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$, and between condition and gender, $F(1, 551) = 8.01$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. As shown in Table 1, the non-Muslim participants rejected this right more strongly for the Islamic schools than for the elite schools. In contrast, the Muslim participants endorsed the right to found separate schools more strongly for Muslims than for very rich parents. Additionally, females were more in favor of the right to found separate schools in the case of Muslim actors ($M = 0.37$) compared to nonreligious actors ($M = -0.49$), whereas males were equally rejecting toward both actors ($M = -0.15$ and $M = -0.17$, respectively). There were no other significant effects, also not for the covariate religiousness.

The right to demonstrate had also two conditions: Muslims and Surinamers. The GLM procedure indicated that the full model explained 12.4% of the variance. There was a main effect for age, $F(1, 549) = 8.94$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. The age effect was negative ($B = -.14$) indicating that older adolescents rejected the right to demonstrate more strongly than the younger ones. There was also a significant main effect for participant group that was, however, qualified by an interaction effect between participant group and condition, $F(1, 549) = 12.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. As shown in Table 1, for the non-Muslim participants, the rejection was stronger for the Muslim condition than for the Surinamers condition. In contrast, the Muslim participants endorsed this right more strongly for the Muslim condition.

Social Implications: Minimal and Maximal

The participants were asked to make judgments on a story about the freedom of speech and on two stories about Muslim minority rights involving the clothing (headscarf) of women. There were two conditions of each scenario that were varied in a between-subjects design: minimal implications and maximal implications.

Examining the free speech score as a dependent variable indicated that the full model accounted for 11.3% of the variance. The GLM procedure showed that there was a main negative effect for religiousness, $F(1, 551) = 8.12$, $p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. There was also a main effect for gender, $F(1, 551) = 9.24$, $p < .003$,

$\eta_p^2 = .03$. Compared to females, males were less against free speech in which religious people are offended ($M = 1.92$, $M = 2.23$, respectively). Age was also found to have a significant main effect, $F(1, 551) = 6.96$, $p = .009$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Younger adolescents were more rejecting than older ones ($B = -.12$). Additionally, we found a main effect for condition that was qualified by a significant interaction effect between condition and participant group, $F(1, 551) = 5.44$, $p = .020$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. As shown in Table 1, non-Muslim participants were more in favor of free speech in the minimal compared to the maximal condition, whereas there was no difference between both conditions for the Muslim participants.

The judgments for the two stories on Muslim minority rights (headscarf) were strongly correlated ($r = .64$; therefore, an average score was used. For this score, the full model explained 32.2% of the variance. There was a positive effect for the covariate religiousness, $F(1, 551) = 7.76$, $p = < .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. The main effect for condition was also significant, $F(1, 551) = 11.31$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. As shown in Table 1, the participants were more accepting in the minimal compared to the maximal condition. This effect was found for both the Muslim and the non-Muslim participants because the interaction between condition and participant group was not significant. There were two other significant main effects: for participant group and for age. These effects were qualified, however, by a significant interaction effect among participant group, age, and gender, $F(3, 551) = 8.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Simple slope analysis showed a positive age effect for non-Muslim males ($B = .16$, $p < .001$). Thus, older non-Muslim males were less accepting than non-Muslim younger males. Further, there was a positive age effect for Muslim females ($B = 19.4$, $p < .001$). Muslim older females were less accepting than Muslim younger females. Age did not have a significant effect for non-Muslim females and for Muslim males.

Beliefs and Dimensions of Minority Practices

The participants were asked to judge four scenarios, two of which were concerned with non-Muslim minority practices and two with Muslim minority practices. For the four scenarios, two dimensions of practices were tapped: performing the actual *act* and seeking *public support* by campaigning for it. In addition, the type of belief forming the basis of the act was varied in a between-subjects design by presenting half of the participants with a moral argument and the other half with an informational argument.

Repeated measures analyses with dimension as within-subjects measures and belief type, participant group, gender, and age as variables indicated for all four scenarios that the participants were more accepting of campaigning for public support than for performing the actual act itself (ps $< .001$, r^2 between .13 and .24). Hence, we found a clear dimension effect for all four scenarios. This effect was similar for Muslim and non-Muslim participants, for males and females, and for the different ages.

Act Performance

The highest correlation between the four judgments about performing the act in the four scenarios was 0.17. This pattern of associations was similar for the non-Muslim and Muslim participants and independent of age. An initial one-way analysis contrasting the four scenarios revealed a significant effect, $F(3, 554) = 25.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. Participants accepted female circumcision the least ($M = 1.90$), followed by nonvaccination ($M = 2.04$), and then by home education ($M = 2.33$) and differential treatment ($M = 2.35$). Except for the latter two scores, all pairwise mean differences were statistically significant (paired samples t tests, ps $< .01$). All the mean scores were also below the neutral midpoint of the scale (3), indicating that, in general, the participant did not support any of the actions.

The four ''act performance'' judgments were analyzed as multiple dependent variables. The multivariate effects (Pillai's) were significant for belief type, participant group, gender, age, and religiousness. In addition, there were significant multivariate interaction effects between participant group and gender, $F(4, 552) = 6.03$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, and between gender and age, $F(4, 551) = 2.64$, $p = .032$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$.

The univariate results indicated that religiousness was positively and significantly related to accepting three of the four acts: The effect for female circumcision was the exception.

The univariate results further indicated that belief type only made a difference for home education, $F(1, 551) = 4.86$, $p = .038$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and for differential treatment, $F(1, 551) = 11.25$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, but not for female circumcision and for nonvaccination. Participants found it more acceptable when home education was based on informational beliefs compared to moral beliefs ($M = 2.46$ and $M = 2.21$, respectively). In addition, participants found differential gender treatment more acceptable when this was based on informational beliefs rather than on moral beliefs ($M = 2.56$ and $M = 2.19$, respectively). There were

no significant interaction effects between belief type and age, gender, or participant group.

The univariate results indicated effects of participant group for female circumcision and differential gender treatment. Both these effects were qualified by significant interaction effects between participant group and gender: for female circumcision, $F(1, 551) = 9.81$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and for differential treatment, $F(1, 551) = 11.39$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. The results for this interaction are presented in Table 2. The table indicates that there is a clear gender difference among the Muslim participants but not among the non-Muslims. Compared to Muslim males, Muslim females were less accepting toward female circumcision and differential gender treatment, $F(1, 231) = 21.35$, $p < .001$. For the non-Muslims, the gender difference was not significant, $F(1, 334) = 3.69$, $p > .05$.

For female circumcision, there was a further interaction effect between age and gender, $F(1, 551) = 8.92$, $p < .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Simple slope analysis indicated that older females were less accepting toward female circumcision than younger females ($B = -.09$, $p < .007$). There was no significant age effect for males ($B = -.01$, $p > .10$).

For home education, the univariate results showed a significant negative effect for age, $F(1, 551) = 4.91$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ ($B = -.13$). There was also a significant interaction effect between participant group and gender, $F(1, 551) = 4.75$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. As shown in Table 2, female Muslims were less supportive of this practice than the other participants.

Campaigning for Public Support

For the four scenarios, the judgments about parents seeking public support by campaigning for it were significantly related ($r > .43$). Therefore, we used an average score for analyzing these responses, and Cronbach's alpha was 0.78. The GLM procedure indicated that there was a significant positive effect for religiousness, $F(1, 551) = 3.67$, $p = .048$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. There was also a significant effect for participant group, $F(1, 551) = 4.89$, $p = .032$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, with non-Muslim participants accepting the campaigning for public support more strongly than Muslim participants ($M = 2.63$ and $M = 2.47$, respectively). In addition, there was a gender difference, $F(1, 551) = 7.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Males were more accepting ($M = 2.75$) than females ($M = 2.37$). No other effects were significant. The full model accounted for 6.8% of the variance.

Table 2
Adjusted Mean Scores (Controlling for Religiousness) and Standard Deviations (Between Brackets) for the Four Parental Practices for Religious Group by Gender

	Non-Muslims		Muslims	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
Female circumcision	1.96 (1.02)	2.19 (1.04)	1.35 (0.90)	2.09 (1.14)
Differential gender treatment	2.01 (1.13)	2.25 (1.12)	2.09 (1.23)	3.15 (1.31)
Home education	2.44 (1.15)	2.43 (1.14)	2.03 (1.15)	2.43 (1.23)
Nonvaccination	1.93 (1.03)	2.14 (1.22)	1.94 (1.09)	2.12 (1.11)

Note. 5-point scales (1 to 5).

Discussion

This research examines how non-Muslim and Muslim adolescents living in the Netherlands reason about free speech and Muslim minority rights. In trying to maximize the relevance and ecological validity of the research, we focused on concrete cases rather than abstract principles, used realistic and currently debated issues instead of unfamiliar and hypothetical scenarios, and presented the participants with conflicting issues.

In general, the participants expressed low to moderate levels of acceptance and endorsement of freedom of speech and minority rights in the various conflicting situations. In agreement with social-cognitive domain theory and research (e.g., Helwig, 1995; Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Wainryb, 1993), these civil liberties were not applied absolutely across the various conflicts. Further, the different judgments were not strongly associated, indicating that no single construct of acceptance or endorsement emerged. The low associations also suggest that it is unlikely that the fixed order in which the measures were presented affected the findings. In addition, we found that the endorsement of free speech and minority rights was sensitive to the context of beliefs and group memberships. Adolescents take into account various aspects of what they are asked to accept and who's freedom of speech and rights they are expected to endorse. The content and the nature of the social implications, the dimension of acceptance, and the underlying beliefs, all made a difference to the judgments.

The group membership of the actor and of the participants also was important. The rejection of freedom of speech was stronger among the Muslim than the non-Muslim participants when it involved offending God and religion and when it concerned

Islam. For the endorsement of Muslim minority rights, the non-Muslim Dutch participants rejected the right to found separate schools and to burn the national flag in a demonstration, and this rejection was stronger for Muslim than for non-Muslim actors. In contrast, Muslim minority participants endorsed these rights more strongly when Muslim actors were involved. Furthermore, participants were less accepting of Muslim practices (the wearing of a headscarf) that contrasted more strongly with other values and operative public norms (maximal vs. minimal condition) and therefore had more far-reaching societal consequences. This was found for both groups of participants. However, in general, Muslim participants accepted these practices more strongly than non-Muslims.

There were also differences between female Muslim participants on the one hand and male Muslims and male and female non-Muslims on the other. Compared to the other three groups, Muslim females more strongly rejected female circumcision, differential gender treatment, and home education. This further indicates that decisions over whether something should be accepted is influenced by group memberships: Muslim females are less accepting when the harm or injustice ensuing from specific practices affects them as females. This result is in agreement with intergroup theories (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and with stigma approaches (e.g., Swim & Stangor, 1998) but, for example, not with the idea that females are more likely to use a care or welfare perspective, whereas males would reason more from a rights perspective (Gilligan, 1982). The responses of the non-Muslim females did not differ from the non-Muslim males and the Muslim males. The practices presented in the scenarios have implications for Muslim females in particular and therefore caused Muslim female participants to reject these practices more strongly.

Existing research on freedom of speech and rights has not examined the role of, for example, religious, gender and national identity (see Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Neff & Helwig, 2002). However, intergroup research and the present findings indicate that it is important to consider these social identities. The group memberships that are at stake and the existing intergroup context influence how majority and minority group children and adolescents evaluate practices and claims of different groups (see Bennett & Sani, 2004). The differences found between the Muslim and non-Muslim participants are in agreement with their specific group positions in Dutch society and do not support the idea that freedoms and rights are of little concern to Muslims or contradictory to Islam (see also Turiel & Wainryb, 1998). Muslims are less in favor of freedom of speech when it involves offending religion and they are more in favor of Muslim minority rights. Their judgments are quite similar to non-Muslims, however, when their group membership is not at stake. Hence, it seems important for future studies on the reasoning about freedom of speech and minority rights to examine the intergroup context and to include measures of, for example, national, religious, and ethnic group identification.

In addition to the differences between the participant groups, there were also similarities. For example, all participants rejected freedom of speech when it involved psychological and physical harm, and the rejection was stronger for the latter than the former type of harm (see also Helwig, 1995). Furthermore, in agreement with other studies (e.g., Wainryb et al., 1998; Witenberg, 2002), adolescents made a clear distinction between dimensions of acceptance in the four scenarios about parental practices. They were more accepting of parents campaigning for public support for these practices than for the actual act itself. This was found for all groups of participants. Not only is the higher acceptance of the public expression of the dissenting beliefs consistent with the idea of free speech but also can be seen as stimulating debate and as causing less direct harm or injustice than the actual act.

Participants were also more accepting of practices based on dissenting informational beliefs than on dissenting moral beliefs. This result is also in agreement with other studies (e.g., Wainryb, 1993; Wainryb et al., 1998) but was only found for two of the four scenarios. For female circumcision and nonvaccination no difference for belief type was found. This might be due to the fact that these two cases are about physical integrity and well-being, which are clear moral issues. These two practices were also the most strongly rejected by the participants. In addition, the effects for belief type were found for both non-Muslim and Muslim participants, for males and females, and for all age groups. These results are in agreement with the social-cognitive domain model and with research that has found that children and adolescents identify moral considerations as general and generalizable to a variety of contexts and groups (Smetana, 2006; Turiel, 2002). In contrast, informational beliefs are similar to social-conventional issues that are seen as group and context specific and that are applied when no clear moral issues are at stake.

The pattern of results demonstrates that adolescents use different forms of social reasoning to evaluate complex social issues of free speech and minority rights. In contrast to the idea of an age-related

progression from less to more principled reasoning, the present results show few and no consistent age effects (see also Helwig, 1995, 1997; Ruck et al., 1998). Younger participants endorsed freedom of speech more strongly in the case of the film director, yet older participants rejected the right to demonstrate more strongly than younger participants did. In addition, we found that age made a difference in combination with other characteristics, such as participant group and gender (see also Helwig, 1997). There was a complex age effect, for example, for the endorsement of Muslim minority rights involving the wearing of a headscarf. For non-Muslim males, age was negatively related to the endorsement of these rights, whereas for Muslim females a positive effect for age was found. These results might be related to adolescents' growing political awareness involving religious and gender group relations and interests. Overall, the findings strongly suggest that judgments about free speech and minority rights do not develop through a stage-like sequence where a less accepting attitude is followed by a more accepting one. A decision of whether a particular expression or practice should be accepted always involves a variety of considerations, and the results show that adolescents weigh different aspects of behaviors and their contexts and consequences.

There are some limitations of the current research that should be considered and that give additional suggestions for further study. For example, the cross-sectional design of the current study does not allow to determine whether the age differences found are due to developmental differences in social reasoning or to some other factor such as context and cohort effects. A domain-specific perspective does not imply that developments in reasoning about rights and civil liberties do not occur in adolescence (see Helwig & Turiel, 2002). There are age-related changes in the ability to conceptualize and assess the information of complex situations and in coordinating different domains of knowledge. These changes do not, however, necessarily lead to different judgments. Younger and older adolescents can make the same judgment, although for different reasons.

It also seems pertinent for future studies to assess other types of belief. Social-cognitive domain theory makes a distinction between moral considerations, social-conventional issues, and psychological concerns. We examined the difference between moral and informational beliefs (Wainryb et al., 1998). However, the distinction between the two may not always be straightforward and can also be operationalized in different ways. For example, religious and cultural expectations do not have to indicate moral considerations but may also involve social-conventional concerns (Turiel, 2002). In addition, there are different kinds of moral principles, such as fairness and equality, and different kinds of social-conventional issues, such as group functioning and tradition. Furthermore, psychological concerns can be involved in judgments because what one is asked to accept or endorse may affect personal freedoms and interests (e.g., Helwig, 1997).

Furthermore, the research has examined only a restricted number of instances of freedom of speech and minority rights. Questions of freedom of speech and minority rights, however, involve many situations and issues and might also depend on the national context. Hence, it would be interesting to systematically conduct cross-national research among both majority and minority groups on the development of conceptions of different freedoms and rights.

Despite these qualification and limitations, we think that the present research makes a contribution to our understanding of the development of the reasoning about free speech and minority rights and by doing so also of our understanding of intergroup relations in diverse societies. There is a large body of research into ethnic and racial stereotypes and prejudice, including studies in European countries such as the Netherlands (e.g., Verkuyten & Thijs, 2001, 2002). This research, however, does not focus on religious differences, whereas religion, and Islam in particular, has emerged as the focus of immigration and diversity debates in Europe (Zolberg & Long, 1999). Furthermore, this research examines group perceptions and evaluations and not the social reasoning about civil liberties and minority practices. These latter topics, however, are at the heart of what is perceived as a ''crisis of multiculturalism'' (Modood & Ahmad, 2007).

Little is known about adolescents' attitudes toward out-groups, about their intergroup social reasoning, and about the development of their views on civil liberties. However, understanding these views is an important research goal both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, we used social-cognitive domain theory and intergroup theories and we tried to show that it is important to examine questions of civil liberties, and morality more generally, in the context of intergroup relations. We agree with Killen et al. (2006) that cognitive domain theory has tended to ignore the intergroup context, whereas intergroup theories have tended to ignore issues revolving around morality. Practically, a diverse, equal, and peaceful society does not require that we all like each other, but it does necessarily mean that people have learned to accept one another and endorse equal civil

liberties. We need to understand how children and adolescents think about free speech and minority rights and develop less or more accepting judgments. The present research has tried to make a contribution to this understanding.

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